

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04
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PASS DEPT OF LABOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, GW, UR
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT OF SOVIET TRADE UNIONS PROMOTES
EAST-WEST EXCHANGES IN DGB JOURNAL

REF: BONN'S A-97, APRIL 4, 1978
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SUMMARY. GERMAN TRADE UNION JOURNAL CARRIES ARTICLE
BY SOVIET TRADE UNION CHIEF IN WHICH HE LAUDS THE CLOSE
TIES THAT HAVE DEVELOPED BETWEEN FRG AND SOVIET UNIONS.
DESPITE SOME "OBSTACLES" AND "DIFFICULTIES" HE SEES
MANY AREAS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND PROJECTS A WIDE
EXPANSION OF RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE LATEST ISSUE OF "WELT DER ARBEIT," THE JOURNAL OF THE GERMAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION (DGB), DEVOTES A FULL PAGE TO AN ARTICLE BY ALEXEY SCHIBAJEW, PRESIDENT OF THE SOVIET TRADE UNION FEDERATION (AUCCTU), IN WHICH HE PRAISES THE EXCHANGES WHICH HAVE DEVELOPED BETWEEN SOVIET AND FRG UNIONS. SCHIBAJEW CALLS FOR INCREASED CONTACTS, IN THE INTEREST OF DETENTE AND "FOR AN OBJECTIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE DISCUSSION OF ALL PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE WORKERS OF BOTH COUNTRIES." AT THE SAME TIME HE LAYS DOWN THE USUAL SOVIET GROUND-RULES, I.E., "THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL RIGHTS, MUTUAL RESPECT AND NON-INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE OTHER PARTY."

2. SCHIBAJEW LISTS THE RIGHTS ENJOYED BY SOVIET WORKERS AND THEIR TRADE UNIONS WHICH ARE MADE KNOWN TO WORKERS IN THE FRG THROUGH EXCHANGE VISITS. THE RIGHTS INCLUDE: THE RIGHT TO SUGGEST LEGISLATION, DISTRIBUTE SOCIAL SECURITY FUNDS, PROHIBIT OVERTIME, SHUT DOWN PLANTS IF LABOR STANDARDS ARE VIOLATED, AND ENFORCE DISMISSAL OF MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS IF THEY FAIL TO OBSERVE REGULATIONS.

3. IN ADDITION TO THE EXCHANGE OF FRATERNAL DELEGATIONS AT TRADE UNION CONVENTIONS, SCHIBAJEW REFERS TO CITY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND REGIONAL TRADE UNION CONTACTS THAT HAVE DEVELOPED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AS WELL AS PLANT-TO-PLANT EXCHANGES. HE FORESEES AN EXPANSION OF SUCH CONTACTS IN THE FUTURE, PARTICULARLY TO CONSIDER PROBLEMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, THE EFFECTS OF SCIENTIFIC-TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS ON THE CONDITION OF WORKERS, SOCIAL INSURANCE, INDUSTRIAL SAFETY AND THE EXTENSION

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OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS IN ENTERPRISES.

4. SCHIBAJEW STATED THAT ALL DGB-AFFILIATED UNIONS
MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THEIR COUNTERPART SOVIET UNIONS
WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE DGB CONSTRUCTION WORKERS
UNION AND THE EDUCATION AND SCIENCE (TEACHERS) UNION.
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5. HE PARTICULARLY PRAISED THE ALL-EUROPEAN TRADE
UNION MEETINGS WHICH WERE HELD IN GENEVA IN 1975 AND
1977 AND CITED THEM AS EVIDENCE OF A MAJOR IMPROVEMENT
IN THE GENERAL CLIMATE OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE
UNION MOVEMENT. SCHIBAJEW SAID THAT THE SOVIET UNIONS
ARE SEEKING WAYS TO ACHIEVE UNITY OF ACTION AMONG THE
MAJOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION FEDERATIONS (ICFTU,
WFTU AND WCL).

6. AFTER CITING ADDITIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GROUNDS
FOR EXPANDING CONTACTS BETWEEN UNIONS OF THE TWO

COUNTRIES, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOME DIFFICULTIES
PERSIST. IN HIS VIEW THESE ARE MAINLY CAUSED BY THE
"ANTI-COMMUNIST BIAS" OF SOME FRG TRADE UNION OFFICIALS
WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND "THE REAL SITUATION IN THE
SOVIET UNION NOR THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOVIET TRADE
UNIONS."

6. EMBASSY WILL POUCH TRANSLATION OF COMPLETE TEXT OF
ARTICLE.

7. COMMENT. SCHIBAJEW'S REFERENCE TO REGIONAL, LOCAL
AND PLANT CONTACTS DEVELOPED BETWEEN DGB AND AUCCTU
UNIONS IS A SUBJECT THAT IS RARELY, IF EVER, COVERED
BY FRG MEDIA. THE LOCATIONS AND FIRMS THAT HE LISTS
SUGGEST AN IMPRESSIVE RANGE OF CONTACTS THAT SOVIET
TRADE UNIONS ARE SEEKING TO CULTIVATE IN THE FRG.

THE SCHIBAJEW ARTICLE IS ONE SIDE OF AN AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE DGB AND THE AUCCTU TO PRINT ARTICLES BY
THE LEADERS OF THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS. DGB PRESIDENT
VETTER REPORTEDLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES IN THE SOVIET
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TRADE UNION JOURNAL TRUD AND OTHER SOVIET NEWS MEDIA.
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